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AUTHOR Mueller, Klaus A.
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ABSTRACT

This manual, to be used in conjunction with 10 demonstration films on the teaching of German in introductory college courses, serves as a guide to the objectives and teaching techniques illustrated in each of the films. The films demonstrate to future teachers of German workable teaching techniques designed to produce specific competencies and emphasize pronunciation, a systematic learning of grammar, an insistence on fluency, and quick student response. Each of the 10 sequences is identified, and the specific techniques and the goals to be achieved are discussed in the commentary. The films are distributed through the Service Center of the American Association of Teachers of German, 339 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106. (RL)

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# TECHNIQUES FOR
# TEACHING GERMAN

A series of demonstration films designed and directed

by

Klaus A. Mueller

Department of German - University of California at Berkeley

with funds provided by a grant from the
University's Innovative Projects in Instruction Program.

Produced through the facilities of the Berkeley Television Office.

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(Introduction and text of film commentary)

1970

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The following Teaching Assistants and Associates in our Department taught the other demonstration classes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Manfred K. Wolfram | - Second demonstration |
| Eileen J. Brunswick | - Third demonstration |
| Wilfried M. Voge | - Fourth demonstration |
| Michael Behal | - Fifth demonstration |
| Herbert D. Davy | - Sixth demonstration |
| Hilke F. von der Goltz | - Seventh demonstration |
| Gerhard R.B. Clausing | - Eighth demonstration |
| Horst Ashelm | - Ninth demonstration |
| Marie-Luise Bonner and Heinke Thomsen | - Tenth demonstration |

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K.A.M.

# INTRODUCTION

At the present time teaching methods, materials, and course content in foreign languages are being widely criticized. Certain aspects of language learning have once more become suspect. Students often question the relevance of foreign language competency in today's world.

During the last fifteen years considerable experimentation and innovation have caused drastic changes in the teaching of foreign languages in schools and colleges. New approaches continue to be tried. The goals of classroom instruction are not always clearly defined.

This film was produced as an adjunct to the teacher training program of the Department of German at the University of California, Berkeley, financed by a grant under the University's Innovative Projects in Instruction program. The various class segments shown attempt to demonstrate to future German teachers examples of workable teaching techniques designed to produce specific competencies. Obviously other techniques have merit and the imaginative teacher will always find innumerable ways to achieve satisfactory learning.

The techniques and methods presented in this film are distinctive because they are based on an approach to language teaching in which the target language is used almost exclusively and which is designed to teach students to speak, read, and write. The presentations illustrate that emphasis on pronunciation, the systematic learning of grammar, the insistence on fluency and quick response, are indeed realistic goals which lead to an ability by the student to use German creatively and to read and discuss literary and cultural material early in the course.

Ten sequences illustrate the various selected teaching techniques. Each sequence is identified and the specific techniques and the goals to be

achieved are discussed in the commentary. This commentary is followed by the presentation of an actual class in session which illustrates as realistically as possible what takes place regarding the interaction between teacher and student in order to achieve the desired results. Additional commentary is given following the demonstration.

The methods and techniques presented illustrate major aspects important in the teaching of beginning and intermediate classes. For each sequence the level of instruction is indicated. Some learners were in the course for three weeks when the class was filmed; others have had instruction for a year and a half. Most classes shown are in the second quarter of study on the college level.

Although the students in the class scenes are learning German in college, language learners on the high school level are faced with essentially the same learning situations. The inherent difference of these two levels consists in the choice of subject matter and reading selections and not in teaching techniques.

The classes in this film were regular classes in session taught by our teaching assistants. They were brought to the studio at a prearranged time to demonstrate a given activity during the Winter Quarter of 1970.

The reality of the demonstration classes was somewhat affected by the filming situation. The cameras, microphones, lights, etc., were all visible to teacher and students. Some naturalness and spontaneity was necessarily sacrificed for this reason. In a few cases a given sequence was repeated to show more effectively what had been planned. In every case, however, the class was asked to come to the studio only once and all footage was filmed within a single 50-minute period. Approximately half the demonstrations required one or two retakes within the one period in which the class was in the studio. In the others the first take proved satisfactory for our purposes. No further rehearsing

took place. Instructors were asked to teach a given segment of the lesson plan in the normal basic course sequence.

For purposes of teacher training it is suggested that the sequences be viewed a number of times followed by discussion. Some demonstrations in the film should be shown again after the whole film has been viewed, so that specific aspects and details of instruction can be better analysed and discussed.

As was stressed at the outset, the methods and procedures demonstrated are not the only ones which achieve results. On the other hand we hope that by presenting some possible workable models future teachers will be helped to teach effectively. Competent and inspired teaching will most likely result in effective learning.

## FIRST DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

The teaching and learning of grammar involves cognitive as well as behavioral aspects. It can be demonstrated that effective sequences exist which involve both these aspects in the learning of forms.

The following demonstration will show the introduction of grammatical forms within already learned lexical context. This type of instruction or drill consists of inductive question-answer drills. The sequence is designed to enable students to perceive the new structures of a given lesson in the context of familiar vocabulary. In addition to perception these inductive exercises demonstrate the function of a new grammatical form in context. Students do not prepare for this activity but draw on the resource of previously learned material and on the direction of the teacher.

One of the advantages of this teaching method is that it can be carried on completely in the foreign language and that the new forms are used in utterances at normal conversational rate of speech and intonation.

Students maintain eye contact with the teacher, books are closed, and students are encouraged to answer each question after the instructor has given the demonstration example. The pace should be fast and students who cannot immediately answer should either be helped by the teacher or another student should be asked to perform. Then the student who could not at first give the answer will be asked again.

The class segment shown in this demonstration is made up of students having had approximately eleven weeks of instruction in German on the basis of five 50-minute contact hours per week.

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DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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You will have noticed the rapid pace of instruction and the close attention of the students. As was mentioned earlier, the instructor insisted on rapid responses and alternated effectively choral with individual responses. In this type of instruction the instructor rarely asks for volunteers but calls on individual students. This procedure ensures maximum utilization of time and a fast pace. When mistakes were made, you will have noticed that the item or question was repeated a number of times until a satisfactory response was obtained. The instructor made an effort to involve all students. She frequently spot-checked comprehension by students of the patterns requested by varying her question technique and by specifically using such interrogatives as Who? What? Where? How? etc. This is an important aspect of instruction since the desired results are not achieved if students do not know what they are saying.

One last comment: the demonstration showed the introduction of new grammatical forms and the aim was to have students identify and understand the use of the forms. Later class activity will ensure that the items thus introduced are drilled sufficiently and that the students will have an opportunity to use the forms in all sense modalities.

Experience has shown that an activity of this type should be limited to approximately 10 minutes during a regular class period. There seems to be a definite limit to the ability of students to perceive new forms and to pay close attention in responding to questions which demand answers as demonstrated.

## SECOND DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

Language is a complex system of symbols expressing experience. Perhaps the two most important elements for a learner of a new language are the learning of structural forms or grammar and lexical items or vocabulary. In the first demonstration we witnessed a method of introducing new structures. The following sequence will demonstrate the introduction of new vocabulary.

The students in this class have had instruction for approximately eleven weeks. The instructor introduces a part of a new dialogue. As in the previous demonstration you will note that books are closed and students maintain eye contact with the instructor. German is used almost exclusively. The instructor gives a brief explanation of the situation pertaining in the dialogue, including the number of persons involved, their names, etc. He checks to make sure students have understood him. He then models the utterances or exchanges of the new dialogue sufficiently frequently to enable students to comprehend. He then asks students to repeat what he has modeled, again making certain that students <u>know</u> what they are saying and that the meaning of the new vocabulary items are understood in the context of the phrases.

It should be noted that the instructor models each phrase or utterance several times before asking students to repeat. Generally choral repetitions precede repetitions by individual students. After one or two exchanges of the dialogue have been introduced in this manner, students are asked to speak and act out that part of the dialogue. In this manner the essential nature of the dialogue form is preserved because students are asked not only to repeat a model but are required to pose questions and initiate the new exchanges as soon as they are able to do so.

The meanings of new words in this type of instruction are made clear

in two ways. First, the meaning of the new word is understood in the context of previously learned items which make up the major part of the dialogue, and second, the instructor demonstrates either through motions and gestures or through visual and tactile aids the meaning of new items. The instructor frequently checks whether students have actually understood by asking questions or by varying slightly the sequence of new items within the utterances. He stresses and emphasizes the new items.

Nonlinguistic elements play a very important role in the process of teaching. Paralanguage--the voice quality, pitch, stress, and speed of utterances--and kinesics--the gestures and motions which accompany speech--contribute greatly to having the learner comprehend new words and meanings. Sometimes it is necessary to have the instructor give the English equivalent of a new item, since in some cases, especially in those involving abstract meanings, it would be a waste of time and effort to make the meaning clear in the foreign language.

Although books should normally be closed, some students may benefit from being permitted to glance from time to time at the printed English version of the new dialogue to facilitate comprehension while the new phrases are introduced. Experience has shown, however, that in most cases and with well-conceived materials, it is not necessary to have students refer to any printed materials, since the ratio of new words to already learned words is small and the dialogue subject matter lends itself to the type of demonstrations of new meanings. Care should be taken that the amount of new material introduced at a given time is limited and that students understand what they are asked to repeat. As was the case in the previous demonstrations, the pace of instruction is as fast as is consistent with the criteria discussed and with the personality of the instructor. It will be demonstrated that even during introduction of new material students are actively involved and con-

sistently corrected.

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DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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You will have noticed that the instructor modeled the utterances of the dialogue with normal and appropriate stress and intonation and that he insisted that students repeat in the same manner. While modeling a new utterance the instructor used the same intonation and stress patterns in order that students would know how to repeat. For technical reasons the voice quality of the students throughout this series is not quite the same as that of the instructor. You will however have noted that the instructor insisted that students speak loudly and clearly and with correct stress and intonation. The correction of pronunciation, especially of the new lexical items, was given high priority.

As with most class activities at beginning and intermediate levels of instruction, there should be a time limit to any type of activity. Thus introduction of new dialogue material is generally confined to a span of ten to twenty minutes of the class period. Under this procedure a new dialogue may be introduced for several days before students are asked to either memorize or drill the material in the language lab or before students are held responsible for dialogue recitation.

## THIRD DEMONSTRATION

### (Comments)

As has been mentioned earlier, many aspects combine to enable a person to communicate in a new language. Despite recent controversy we believe that a certain amount of memorization contributes to language mastery. As a consequence students are asked to memorize brief dialogues, dialogue adaptations or short conversations and to demonstrate from time to time that they have indeed done so. Even though the classroom learning situation is inherently artificial and to a considerable extent unreal, students should be asked to act out the dialogue in a situational aspect approximating the one in which it would normally occur or improvise such a situation to at least somewhat overcome the classroom milieu. The following demonstration illustrates how this can be done by very simple means.

In order that students are able to act out a dialogue, they must overlearn the dialogue for preparation so that they will be able to perform despite the inevitable distractions and stresses that such performance entails.

During dialogue recitations the instructor almost never corrects or interrupts in order that students are given maximum opportunity to speak without becoming inhibited. The instructor carefully notes mistakes made but corrects only after students have finished the recitation. It is inevitable that some students will at times not remember a word or phrase or the sequence of utterances. For this reason it is good procedure to appoint for each student acting out the dialogue another in the class who must be ready to cue him when he falters. This will result in better attention of all students to the details of the dialogue recitation, and the number of students actively involved in a given recitation is doubled. In addition, the pace of recitation is kept natural and the need for instructor intervention is considerably lessened.

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DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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As you will have noticed, dialogues to be memorized are brief and contain high-frequency words and structural patterns. Although students are asked to memorize, they should be told as they act out a dialogue or conversation, that they may change utterances to fit the context of the dialogue it they cannot remember the exact textual version. There is obviously a limit to such improvisation and it is suggested primarily so that students realize that they are engaging in a real conversation. Normally students are required to memorize a conversation once a week.

In order to obtain the desired results, it is necessary that a high degree of fluency of performance is insisted upon and that pronunciation and intonation errors are conscientiously corrected by the instructor after recitation. In some cases it may be necessary to ask that the same dialogue be acted out on a subsequent day if the original performance by most students was poor.

## FOURTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

After the new lexical and structural items of a given lesson or unit have been introduced and the students have had an opportunity to work on the material orally in class and in writing at home, it is useful to conduct rapid-fire question and answer practice in class. This will give students confidence and will actually demonstrate that they have learned the new materials. At the same time students are provided with the necessary practice in speaking which only a session with an instructor makes possible.

The students in the following demonstration have had instruction in German for only six weeks. They have had an opportunity, if they so desired, to preview some of the questions in the textbook. In some cases the core questions are assigned prior to class practice. In all cases variation of the questions in the text are used in this type of classroom drill.

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## DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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In the session just shown, it is useful to point out once more the importance of a fast pace of instruction. Rarely should pauses of any length occur. If a student is unable to answer a question or to respond to a direction to ask a question, another student should immediately be called on. It is good practice to return to the student who was not able to perform as quickly as possible so that he will not be discouraged or lose interest. Most importantly he must be given the opportunity to demonstrate that he also is able to answer the question and that his first failure was mainly an inability to respond as quickly as desired.

As in the previous demonstrations it should be noted that the instruc-

tor consistently checks whether students know what they are saying. By checking in this manner, the instructor is able to introduce variety and is further able to help students with individual problems and difficulties.

## FIFTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

In the next class situation the question-answer technique and intensive drilling to achieve language fluency is carried a step further. Students are asked to not only answer or ask questions but in addition to remember what previous responses have been and incorporate these in their responses. This is a challenging activity which heightens students' motivation. It is often referred to as a sequential or chain drill.

Students in this class have had approximately 13 weeks of instruction.

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## DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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In this session students' pronunciation and intonation were corrected to a minimal extent. This was done to encourage fluency and help students remember the responses of previous students. Mistakes in morphology and syntax, however, should be corrected as much as possible, and the instructor should be ready to help when a student is unable to continue. This makes it necessary that the instructor is able to perform at least as well as is required of students. In other words he must remember the sequence of the chain drill. This will ensure, at least in part, that the instructor will not make unreasonable demands.

## SIXTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

This sequence shows students in their sixth week of instruction engaging in intensive drilling of structure. The main purpose of this type of drill is to condition students to use the new structures of the unit in a great variety of simple contexts. Maximum student participation and a rapid instructional pace should be maintained. The instructor furnishes the model which students are to follow in using a particular structure. After this model has been given, the instructor cues students as rapidly as possible to achieve the variation of responses that demonstrate the function and use of the grammatical item. Students are required to respond individually and in chorus. The ultimate aim of drills of this type is to achieve automatic responses to oral stimuli and to gain confidence in the realization that the forms have been mastered in a variety of contexts.

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## DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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As in most previous demonstrations, books are closed and eye contact with the instructor is maintained. When students hesitate, the instructor immediately helps or asks another student to respond. The drill of a given form is not concluded until most students are able to respond as required. It is recommended that students be called on rather than be asked to volunteer. Spot-checking to make sure that students know what they are saying again is important. Learning will not take place if students are simply mouthing or mimicking answers according to a model, without comprehension. Pronunciation should be corrected as necessary and good pronunciation should be encouraged and can be required since the responses asked for are brief. This type of in-

## SEVENTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

One of the aims of modern foreign language instruction is to have students develop reading skills as early as possible and to discuss with some fluency what they have read. For this reason the basic course materials should include reading selections, and class activity should provide for discussion of what has been read.

In the following demonstration of a class in the fifteenth week of instruction students demonstrate through question-answer technique how well they have understood an assigned reading passage. You will note that in addition to brief questions requiring short answers, the instructor attempts to reach a point at which students are able to not only answer questions or ask for clarification of what has been read, but are also able to give summary comments. It is important when discussing assigned reading that an attempt be made to relate the reading to students' individual interests, the classroom situation, the events of the day, etc. It is important to develop students' ability to paraphrase as part of the discussion of a reading selection.

Contrary to the previous demonstrations, students in this class are beginning to show that they are able to generate language as well as to respond to specific oral and written stimuli at an early stage in the course.

## DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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As in previous scenes, it should be noted that German is used almost exclusively by both the students and the instructor. It is advantageous but not absolutely necessary that students are asked not to look at the reading passage as it is being discussed in class. When it is useful for students

tensive structure drill should normally be carried on for about ten to fifteen minutes in a given class session.

or instructor to refer to the text, it should generally be done for purposes of reference, clarification of meanings, etc., and not for the purpose of translating sentences or passages.

It will have been noted that the pace of instruction is not quite as rapid in this activity as during drill sessions or when new material is introduced. This is as it should be, since the student must be given a reasonable amount of time to formulate the type of responses required in this activity. Correction of pronunciation and grammatical mistakes must be done judiciously and with some limit, in order not to discourage students from speaking as extensively as they feel they are able to.

## EIGHTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

The following demonstration is the first one showing students at the intermediate level. They are in the middle of the fourth quarter of instruction, and the class is discussing an assigned reading selection.

At this level students' attention is focused on both reading for content and on review of structures. As in beginning classes instruction is carried on almost exclusively in German, and an effort is made to maintain fluency and good pronunciation while at the same time introducing students to German literature. The questions and discussions concern themselves mainly with checking and clarifying the content of what has been read. Interpretation and discussion of style is generally left for a later phase. Students in this class progress from answering brief questions to giving longer comments on the reading.

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## DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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You will have noticed that the instructor quite often asked for repetition of an answer or a comment when he felt that the original answer had not been quite satisfactory from the point of view of either content or correctness. On the other hand not all mistakes or incomplete answers were corrected in order that students be encouraged to speak as fluently and with as little inhibition as possible. Students at this stage find considerable satisfaction in the realization that they are able to read, understand, and talk about unedited literary selections.

## NINTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

The following demonstration shows students at the same level of instruction as the previous one. They are in the middle of their fourth quarter. Again the class is concerned with a discussion of a German short story. In contrast to the previous demonstration, the instructor in this class concentrates on having students give resumés of content in response to the instructor's comments. Note that the instructor does not only ask questions of students but prefaces each question by a brief summary of a portion of the reading selection. This serves as a cue or guide to the resumé demanded from the student.

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DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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You will have noted that in addition to practice in speaking, the student received considerable practice in listening comprehension. The instructor's formulations preceding his questions were not quotes from the text but his own summaries. This in turn encouraged students to formulate their responses in a like manner.

The demonstration just witnessed illustrates the ability of students at the beginning of the second year of German study to discuss literary readings in German with considerable confidence.

## TENTH DEMONSTRATION

(Comments)

A) First Sequence

The last two brief demonstrations in the series are included to show that, under a program of language instruction as demonstrated in this series, students in the middle of their fifth quarter are able to begin to interpret both lyric as well as prose selections from German literature.

The first demonstration will show a class discussing Goethe's "Erlkönig".

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FIRST DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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Students were asked to concentrate on interpretation of literature. One of the serious problems at this stage is that some students find it difficult to maintain the level of lexical and structural competency maintained in earlier stages. Periodic drills to maintain a high degree of language competency are advocated at this level.

B) Second Sequence

The second demonstration on this level shows the same students with another instructor discussing the symbolism and motives in Hugo von Hofmannsthal's "Das Erlebnis des Marschalls von Bassompierre". As in the previous demonstration, it can be seen that the beginnings of literary interpretation are possible and can be handled in German at this stage.

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SECOND DEMONSTRATION ON FILM

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